

a chartered association. It is affiliated with both the Michigan Association of Home Builders, and the National Association of Home Builders, to be sure that its members can share their own discoveries and learn from other colleagues in the profession ways to better and more economically construct housing that will last.

The Bay County Home Builders Association has grown from its original 21 members to its current membership of 85 builders and remodelers and 153 associate members, including financial institutions, subcontractors, material suppliers, and others who are involved in some fashion with the building industry. They are involved in a wide range of activities that ultimately benefit the homeowner, including offering seminars on preparing for a builder's license and other subjects of importance to the industry. They provide a very important service in helping to further inform the public of recent developments in construction and design, including the most impressive annual Home Show and Parade of Homes.

The association is also a vital partner in many community projects, including its work with the Bay County Chamber of Commerce and the Bay County Growth Alliance.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES VERNON

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute Charles Vernon upon his retirement from the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and resignation of chairmanship of the Santa Monica Bay restoration project. It is an honor to recognize Charles for his work toward water pollution control.

Throughout the last 8 years, Charles' work has been vital to the success of the Santa Monica Bay restoration project. He was instrumental in working to secure Santa Monica Bay's nomination as a National Estuary Program and subsequently the founding and creation of the restoration project in 1989.

Since its founding, the Santa Monica Bay restoration project has been the primary organization dedicated to preserving the bay for citizens in our community. Charles has consistently held key leadership positions serving as vice chair of its management committee and upon start of bay restoration plan implementation, chair of the governing Bay Watershed Council and Bay Oversight Committee. It is because of Charles' hard work and dedication we have made progress in revitalizing our bay.

Beyond his work with the restoration project, Charles is an individual of great integrity and personal warmth. His wholesome nature reflects that of his past when he was a farmer, reaping the miracle of life from the ground. It is no wonder that today he is dedicated to maintaining the sanctity of our precious resources.

"I wiped away the weeds and foam, I fetched my sea-born treasures home; But the poor, unsightly, noisome things had left their beauty on the shore, with the sun and the sand and the wild uproar." These words of Ralph Waldo Emerson eloquently describe Charles' devotion to saving our precious Santa

Monica Bay. It is for his work and extraordinary dedication, Mr. Speaker, that I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join our community in thanking Charles for his dedication to the bay. I congratulate Charles Vernon upon his retirement and wish him great success in all future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, this morning I participated in one of America's most important traditions: voting. Every time I step in the voting booth I am reminded that we must not take for granted the rights that we Americans have to decide who will represent us in the White House, Senate, House of Representatives, statehouse, city hall, city council, school board, and the list goes on.

For that reason, please let the record show that I was unavoidably detained and was unable to cast two adjournment votes this morning in the House.

TRIBUTE TO THE PUERTO RICAN TRAVELING THEATER

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to a hard working group of people who compose The Puerto Rican Traveling Theater [PRTT]. The PRTT produces plays by Hispanic writers from all heritages, and performs them alternately in Spanish and English. These programs, which the company provides for free for the economically disadvantaged, have been hugely successful. During Hispanic Heritage Month, I think it is only appropriate to honor this group, which has made such a contribution to the Latino community.

On September 18 the theater celebrates its 30th anniversary season at the Copacabana with a star-studded gala entitled "Latino Legends and Legacies."

For 30 years PRTT has performed productions of impeccable artistic quality in both Spanish and English. Having performed all over New York, in 22 different locations, the PRTT is a well known commodity in the Hispanic Community. The theater communicates with direct mails to 50,000 Hispanic households each year and has a live audience of 15,000 annually, of which 95 percent are Hispanic. Through their annual summer touring, they reach out to 22 different geographic communities in New York and New Jersey, and have a large network of contacts with the leadership organizations in these communities. The PRTT also received critical acclaim from the New York Times, the New Yorker, El Diario, among other major press.

Founding/Artistic Director Miriam Colon recently received the 1996 Governor's Award for the Arts on PRTT's behalf, along with such luminaries as Robert DeNiro, Leo Castelli, and Jazz legend Milt Hilton. The Award Ceremony

hosted by Governor George Pataki was aired on PBS in November. Ms. Colon is also known in the film industry with her most recent films, "Lone Star", directed by John Sayles, and "Sabrina", with Harrison Ford. Most recently she appeared on the Bill Cosby Show.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, I would like to wish them much success with their future endeavors and look forward to celebrating another 30 years of performances.

TRAGEDY IN HAITI

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this week there was another terrible tragedy on the small island of Haiti.

An overcrowded ferry sank just offshore and hundreds of people were killed. There are conflicting reports about the number of deaths, with estimates ranging from 300 to 800. The true figure may never be known.

But what is known is that basic safety functions, which may have prevented many deaths, were ignored. Although the ferry had only been in service for 10 days, there were no lifejackets on board, doors were bolted shut, and the passenger load was above legal limits. Had any of these factors been different, hundreds of families would not be in mourning today.

I extend my most sincere condolences to the families of the deceased and all of the Haitian people. I am pleased that the U.S. Government has announced that we would provide some assistance to the families of the deceased, although there is scant solace to provide to a child whose parent is gone.

My only hope is that ferry operators, not only in Haiti, but around the world, will learn from this terrible tragedy, and observe the safety laws which are designed to prevent these kinds of tragedies.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH AND PATRICIA GARLOCK

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I honor two constituents and friends, Joseph and Patricia Garlock, by marking the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary, which will be celebrated this October 4. I want to send Joe and Pat my warmest congratulations on this special occasion.

I have known both Pat and Joe for a number of years, and I want to convey how much this couple has given to their family and to the Lima, OH, community. Pat and Joe are lifelong residents of Lima, having met a few years after her graduation from St. Rose High School and his graduation from St. Johns High School. They settled down to live on West High Street, where they still live today, some 43 years later.

Pat worked as a store clerk, has been a valued member of the choir at St. Charles Church for years, and is still active in volunteering her time with the Heartbeat of Lima,